Boston 1684 Poem

C

A MONUMENTAL MEMORIAL OF *MARINE* MERCY

BEING

An Acknowledgment of an High Hand of *Divine Deliverance* on the *Deep* in the Time of diſtreſs,

IN

A Late Voyage from *Boſton* in *New-England* To *LONDON*, Anno 1683.

In a Poem. *By Richard Steere.*

To which is added *Another* Occaſioned by Several *Remarkable Paſſages* happening at the *Birth* of a *Male Child* on Board the *ſame Ship* in *her* Voyage *Returning* 1684.

By the ſame *Author* then a *Paſſenger*.

Printed at *BOSTON* in *New-England* by *Richard Pierce* for *James Cowſe* Stationer Anno 1684.

To the Reader.

Reader

I *Here present thee with an Impartial Narrative, Collected from a* Diurnall, *and other Credible Informations of some Persons who had a share in this so* never to be forgotten *a Deliverance, and at whose Importunity it was Reduced into this small* Tract, *and shrouded in the modern Attire of* Measure *and* Cadency, *whose even and easie Pace being more Alluring and Captivating (Especially with youth, or the Crittically Ingenious of this Age) than the Elaborate* Volumns *of* Prose *left to us by our Worthy Ancestors, may probably the sooner* Decoy *or Invite thy Perusal.*

I could not Conveniently avoyd the use of some Sea phrases *The Subject being a* Sea Deliverance, *tho they may seem improper and unintelligible to a* Land Capacity. *And if I have erred in misapplying*

To the Reader,

Misapplying those Termes *of* Art, *I hope the Ingenious* Mariner *will attribute it to the want of Experience in the* Tarpolin *Tongue:*

But to put a period to this Epistle,

Read and Admire the Mercy, -- *Tho' the Stile*
May make thee think it hardly worth the while.

A

MONUMENTAL MEMORIAL
OF
MARINE MERCY &c.

SInce Every *Quill* is silent to Relate
What being known must needs be wonder'd at
I take the boldness to present your *Eye*
With Safty's *Prospect* in Extremity,
Which tho not Cloath'd with *Academick* Skill,
Or lofty Raptures of a *Poet*'s Quill;
But wrapt in *raggs*, through which your eyes may see
The *Naked* Truth in plain simplicitee.
I without further prologue *Lanch with* Ink
With Captain *Balston* in th' *Adventure Pinck*;
Who in *December* on the fourteenth day,
His Anchors *weigh'd* in *Massachusets BAY*,

New

New-England's Chiefeſt *Port*, and *ſayling* on,
Soon *lay'd the Land* below the *Horizon*.
The *Sea* was kind, the Sky ſerene and clear,
All ſeem to ſmile, no threating Frowns appear;
Yet ſometimes Clouds of Rain, of Hail, of Snow,
Sometimes the *winds* more lofty, ſometimes low,
The *Mariners* and *Paſſengers a'board*,
Enjoying what the Veſſel did afford
With Satisfaction, and in full Content:
This good beginning was Encouragement
Of good ſucceſs, in hope and expectation
The Ship might prove an *Ark* of preſervation;
Her *ſwelling ſayls* gave her a nimble motion,
Making her *Keel* to *plough* the Yeilding *Ocean*,
Whoſe little *Billows* ſtill her *Bow* out braves,
Glideing Tryumphant o're the *Curled waves*.
Thus for five weeks the gentler winds did play
Upon the *Oceans* Surface to convey
Our little *Pinck*, filling her plyant Sayles
With eaſie *Breezes*, ſweet *Topgallant Gailes*:
And now the *Mariners* by Judgment found
We did approach nigh to *Great Brittains* ground
And therefore *heav'd* the *Deep-ſea lead* to *ſound*,
Which tho they *Fathom'd* not did Truth afford,
For the ſame night a *Land bird* came *a'board*,
And the next morning we beheld two more
Which made the Judgment good they gave before.
Had we continu'd *thus* upon the Deep
We had bin Charm'd into a drowſie ſleep
Of calme Security, nor had we known
The Excellence of *PRESERVATION*;

We had been Dumb and ſilent to Expreſs
Affectedly the Voy'ges good ſucceſs.
But to awake and Rowſe our ſleepy minds,
The *Po'wrs* above let looſe th' unruly winds,
Heav'ns milder *Puffs* with violence at laſt
Let fly more fierce, and *blow* a ſtronger *Blaſt*:
The dark'ned Sky with gloomy *Clouds* o're ſpread,
Whoſe moiſt'ned *fleeces* have *Enveloped*
Tempeſtous Flaws which Iſſue more and more
In *Thunder*'s Language, or as *Cannons* roar:
The weighty Seas Roul from the *Deeps* beneath:
Hill ſtands on *hill* by force of Heav'n blown breath,
And from the *rocks foundations* do ariſe
As tho reſolv'd to *ſtorm* th' *Impending* Skyes;
Flaws from thoſe lofty *Battlements* are hurld,
As to *a Chaos* they would ſhake the world:
Thus as between a warr of *Sea* and *Heaven*,
From place to place our little *Ship* is driven;
And by the Seas toſt like a ball in ſport,
From *wave to wave* in *Neptunes Tennis Court*.
While thus the *winds* & *ſeas* their pow'rs diſpute
A neighb'ring object did our Eyes ſalute,
A Sayle to windward; (in Diſtreſs no doubt)
Who *Fir'd a Gun* and *heav'd* their *Colours out*;
We *made* her *Engliſh*, but no help could give,
The Lofty Seas found each enough to *live*
But in the morning we *to windward* were
And *Bearing down* reſolv'd to *ſpeak with her*,
And underſtood ſhe from *Eaſt India* came,
Under Command of Captain *Hide* by Name

Burden *ſix hundred Tuns* and *Ninety Men*
Having about ten *months* from *India* been,
And had bin *Beating* ſix *weeks* on the *Coaſt*
Wanting *Proviſ'on*, almoſt ſpent and Loſt:
An Interval of *ſtorms* became their freind,
And gave us leave ſome little help to lend:
The *ſtorm* renewing its *Impetuous Force*
Did Each from Other further off Divorce,
Yet we might ſee them two or three dayes more,
But ſince have heard that they were drave *a-ſhore*
Somewhere in *Cornwall*, on the *Weſtern Coaſt*,
And ev'ry *Soul* except two *Boyes* were loſt.
Still the reſiſtleſs *winds* rebellious grow,
As they the *Univerſe* would Overthrow,
The pondrous *ſeas* like Rowling *Mountains* ſtill,
Each *Billow* ſeeming an *Alpean* hill
By its prodigious Altitude: Deſpair
And fear of Danger, moves all lips to *pray'r*
Mixt with *Induſtry*, but *Induſtry* failes,
The *Pumps* are now in uſe but not the *Sayles*,
The Artiſt's *Quadrants* now are uſeleſs grown,
For *Darkneſs* dwells upon our *Horizon*;
Thus we for ſev'ral days upon the *Ocean*
Did *Ly a Hull*, keeping our *Pumps* in motion;
Till *January twenty ſixth* at night,
A mighty *Sea* did *Overwhelm* us quite,
Which falling down with a reſiſtleſs ſtroke
Both our Ships *Waſte* (or well built *Gunwalls*) broke
And carr'd away: now ſeeming like a *Wreck*
From the *Fore-caſtle* to the *Quarter Deck*,

The *Long boat* ,*Windleſs*, *Captſtern*, with the blow
Beſides two weighty *Anchors* from the *Bow* ,
With *Ropes*, & *Ring-bolts* (where *ſ*y *Boat* was faſt ,
And we conſtrain'd to cut our *Mizen maſt* ,)
All loſt at once : Afflictions now prevail ,
And each mans heart and ſtrength begins to fail ;
Sometimes we ſeem to *ſink* ſometimes to *float* ,
The *Maſters mate* tear's from his back his Coat
And ſtuffs between the *Timbers* ; then they cry
For *Bedding* , *Ruggs*, *and Blankets* eagerly ,
Which when obtain'd they Crowd into each place
Where *ſtreames* of *water* Iſſu'd in apace :
But all Induſtry ſeems without ſucceſs ,
The *Rageing ſtorm* grows rather more than Leſs ;
Over thoſe *Ruggs* they added *ſkins* of *Bears* ,
And two new *Clothes* which our new *mainſail* ſpares;
Here may the hand of providence be Ey'd ,
The *ſayl* was made by thoſe two *clothes* too wide,
Which by ſo much, we had made ſo much leſs
But a few dayes before our great Diſtreſs ;
Ropes *Fore and Aft* were *ſtreched* to ſecure
The *Mariners*, who ſcarcely could endure
Thoſe *Big-ſwel'd Billows*, (what are feeble men ?)
So oft waſh'd in, and out and in agen ,
Sometimes upon, ſometimes within the Ocean ;
The *Pumps* nev'r *ſucking* tho in Conſtant motion ;
Whilſt all the men and women then *on board*
With earneſt Cryes did call upon the *LORD* .
The *Seas* did frequently *o'erflow* the *ſhip* ,
And we were often buri'd in the *Deep* :

The

The Cheſts *between Decks ſwim* as in a *flood*,
Where men up to their *knees* in water ſtood,
Expecting ev'ry Moment *grim look'd Death*
With that cold Element would ſtop their breath.
When ſuddenly a voice ſalutes our ears,
With Joy unſpeakable amidſt our Fears,
One of the PUMPS *does* SUCK! who can believe
What unexpected Comfort a *Repreive*
Brings a Condemned *Convict*: So that Voice
Cauſed each Caſt down ſpirit to Rejoyce.
But on the *Fifth* of *February* we
Ship'd a prodigious *Mountain of a ſea*,
Which with a pondrous and reſiſtleſs Stroke
The Fixed *Table* and the Benches broke,
And with its Force Op'ned the *Cabbin* Door:
A weighty *Cheſt of Tooles* away it bore,
Then with loud Ecchos ev'ry Tongue declares
Our Period come, our Hopes were now Deſpaires,
For we lay *buri'd* in the *Oceans Womb*,
And might conclude it was our *wat'ry Tomb*;
But an Almighty power became our Freind,
Cauſing our *buri'd Veſſel* to Aſcend,
And by degrees climb up the *Mountain waves*,
From whence our *eyes* might view our *fluid Graves*;
Thus the Great God did Snatch us from below,
Unto whoſe pow'r we all our ſafeties owe.
Some few dayes after we a Ship might ſee,
Which *Coming up with* underſtood to be
For *England bound*, and from *Virginia* came,
Gregory Sugar was her *Captains* Name;

So

So *Leaky* (that tho they did what they could)
Sh' had *ſix* or *ſev'n foot water in the Hould* ,
The Safety of their *Lives* they only ſought ,
For to preſerve their *Veſſel* they could not ,
And *Hoyſting* out their *Boat* to come *a'board*
Which could not Safety to them all afford,
Yet *Thirteen* of them ſoon into it preſt :
And *putting off*, promiſ'd to fetch the Reſt :
When they came nigh our *Side* ſuch fear was ſhown,
None ſought the good of *others* but his *own* ,
Each ſtriving to preſerve himſelf with haſt,
without regard to *make the Painter faſt* ;
(Had they Endeavour'd , it had bin in vain)
The *Boat* ſuch wrong and dammage did ſuſtain ;
In *Laying us aboard* her *Bows* were *Stav'd* ,
That t'was meer *Mercy* any man was ſav'd :
Soon the Diſabled *Boat was gon a drift* ,
And now no hope of preſervat'on left
For thoſe behind, who were in number five ,
For 'twas not poſſible the Ship ſhould *Live* ,
Nor with our Veſſel did we dare come nigh ,
For ſtill the troubled Sea *ran mountains high* ,
Tho their Intreaties, Peircing Cries and Grones ,
Might even draw Remorſneſs out of Stones ;
And now becauſe of the approaching night ,
We did adviſe them to *hang out a Light* ,
Which but till eight a Clock appear'd in Sight ;
After which time it did no more appear ,
And we concluded (as we well might fear)
They then went down : Tho we could not *relieve*
Their *wants*, their *loſs* we could not chooſe but *grieve*.

And now ſome Comfort we begin to find,
The *winds* are *Calmer* and the *Seas* more kind,
Now Heav'ns alſcourging hand its ſtrokes withdrew
And former Conſolations did Renew,
By giving us at length the *Sight* of *Land*,
By an Or'e ruling providential hand:
Our Cloudy cares appear to fly apace,
And Comforts ſeemingly ſupply their place;
The fourteenth day at *Plymouth* we Arrive,
With thoſe thirteen we had preſerv'd alive:
The nineteenth day for *London* we *ſet ſayle*,
With not too much *wind*, but a mod'rate Gale:
But as if *Heav'n* with anger ſhould reprove,
That we thoſe mercies did not well Improve;
Its *Breath* comes forth with *Fury* as before,
And we tho in the *Downes* and nigh the *Shore*,
Muſt feel more *ſtrokes* of the chaſtiſing *Rod*
Of our offended of our angry GOD.
The Two and twentieth day much *wind* did blow,
When in the *Downs* we let our *Anchor* goe,
But it *came home*: we our *Shift Anchor Caſt*,
Which (*inſignificant*) *came home* as faſt,
And we were driven up *alongſt* the *Side*
Of a *Ship* there, which did at *Anchor ride*,
Our *Anchor* took her *Cable*, and did paſs
Up with a ſpeedy motion to her *Haſs*,
Which at their *Bows* they *Cutting* from the *Cable*,
And t,other *Anchor* being too unable
To bring us up, broke in the *ſhank*. and we
Again (by Violence) *Drove out to Sea*;

We

We thought to *Anchor* then in *Poulſtone Bay*,
And let our *ſmall Bower go* without delay,
Which like a rotten ſtick was quickly broke
(When once it came to ſtrain) both *ſtewks* & *ſtock*,
Neither *Shift-Anchor*, *Beſt* nor yet *Small Bower*
To *Bring us up* had ſtrength enough or power;
And in the Afternoon the *winds* Reſtrain
Their furious *Blaſts*, now only did remain
Our ſmall *Cedge Anchor*, (unto which we muſt
Our *Lives*, our *Ship*, and all her *Cargo* truſt,)
Which *Letting go*, Heav'ns care did ſo provide,
That we that *Ebb* ſecure in ſafety *Ride*;
From which our apprehenſions may Inſpect,
How the *Great* God by *Small* meanes doth protect;
Whoſe ſtrength can make our ſtrongeſt *cables* weak,
Our *Cobwebs* ſtrong, no earthly ſtrein can break,
That we might put no Truſt in *Earthen* Powers:
For weak is all the *Fortitude* of Our's.
An *Anchor* we that night from *Shore* obtain.
And ſo Return into the *Downs* again,
And *weighing* thence, favour'd with *winds* & *floods*,
Our *ſelves* in Safety with our *ſhip* and *goods*,
The *Twenty fifth* (aſſiſted by the Lord)
Arriv'd at *London* and at *Ratcliff Moor'd*.

Thou God of this great Vaſt, *that doſt Command*
With thy Almighty Hand,
Water, Earth, Air, and Fire
(*The Elements:*) *the* Sun, *the* Moon, *and* Stars
Act not their own affaires,
But what thou doſt require:
O who can view thy pow'r, *& not thy* pow'r *admire.*

'Tis thou Alone art our alone ſupport ;
Thy Mercy's our ſtrong fort ;
Thou giv'ſt us length of dayes ;
To thee th' Almighty *and* Tri-une *JEHOVE ,*
Dwelling in Heav'en *above ;*
Be Everlaſting Praiſe ;
O who can taſt thy Good, *& not* Thankſgiving *Raiſe*

A

POEM

OCCASIONALLY WRITTEN ON

Some Remarkables *hap'ning at the* Birth *of the* Son *of* Thomas *and* Sarah Wallis *upon the* Atlantick *or Weſtern* Ocean, *July the* 26 1684.

WAllis, (for yet thou haſt no other *Name*)
This *Poem*, if thou live to read the ſame
In thy maturer years, thou mayſt from thence
Ground Contemplations on God's *Providence*.
At thy *Nativity* the *Southern Gales*
With Gentler *Breezes* faintly fill'd our Sailes,
The Curled *Ocean*'s wrinkled Brows were down;
Whoſe Surface *Smil'd* that ſeem'd before to *frown*;
Neptunes Attendants from the *Deeps* reſort,
And dance *Levaltos* in his *wat'ry Court*;
When thou wert Born, *July the Twenty ſixt*,
Grampas and Sholes of *Porpoiſe* (Intermixt)
Attend the Ship, and *Pitterels* take Wing,
Both *Fiſh* and *Fowl* Advene the *Goſſipping*:
And when the *Evening* of the day drew nigh,
The big ſwell'd Clouds darkned the *Azure* Sky
Shaking their dropping *Fleeces* on the *Maine*,
And to their Element return again;
Lightnings bright *Flaſhes* iſſu'd from the Skye,
And *Peals* of Thunder Eccho'd from *on high*:
Theſe things attended thy *Nativity*.

The *Climate* where thou thy firſt *breath* didſt draw,
Was between *Europe* and *America*:
About the *Latitude* of *Forty four*,
And *New-found-Land* was judg,d the *nigheſt ſhore*:
The *Finck Adventure* ſerv'd at once inſtead
Of thy *Birth-chamber*, *Cradle*, and thy *Bed*;
Hold not the meaneſs of the place in Scorn,
For *Chriſt* himſelf was in a *Stable* born:
When thy reflecting thoughts ſhall call to mind,
The Hardſhips incident to Humane kind,
Then let the *Eye* of *Faith* thy mind Convey
To view the *Manger* where thy *Saviour* lay.
Whom *God* hath ſent to bear thy *ſinfull load*;
Thou haſt no more to doe but *ſerve thy GOD*.

Now may the *Parents* of the *Child* enjoy,
Succeeding Comforts in their *Sea-born* Boy,
May his maturer years cauſe Joy and *mirth*,
Sweetning the *Troubles* that attend his *Birth*.
May they thoſe Conſolating Mercies prize,
As from the *God* of *Mercies* they Ariſe,
And from his *never-failing Fountains* flow,
To make their minds up to Thankſgiving grow;

If the *Boy* lives and Capable to *Read*,
Tho the mean *Author* of theſe Lines be *Dead*,
Yet 'tis his will the *Youth* ſhould have the ſame,
And therefore, thereunto Subſcribes his name.

RICHARD STEERE.

FINIS.